

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04771 141237Z

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----092289 141238Z /43

O 141220Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8812

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4771

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUN, SF

SUBJECT: DEATH OF STEVE BIKO

1. CONGEN JOHANNESBURG HAS FURNISHED FOLLOWING REPORT BASED
ON CONVERSATION WITH SHUN CHETTY THIS MORNING:

A. SHUN CHETTY, LAWYER FOR BIKO FAMILY, ATTENDED POST MORTEM
YESTERDAY WITH INDEPENDENT PATHOLOGIST. CHETTY IS BEING
EXTREMELY CLOSE-MOUTHED ABOUT RESULTS BUT CONFIDED "THE USG
WOULD NOT BE EMBARRASSED IF IT PROCEEDED WITH A PROTEST IN
THE STRONGEST TERMS". IN ORTHER WORDS, CHETTY GAVE CLEAR
IMPLICATION THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF MISTREATMENT. CHETTY SAID
RESULTS OF TESTS WOULD NOT BE KNOWN FOR PROBABLY AT LEAST
A WEEK, BUT HE AND ADVOCATE HARRY PITMAN FEEL THEY HAVE A
VERY STRONG CASE FOR AN INQUEST.

B. PITMAN SAID THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THE SAG WOULD NOT
HOLD INQUEST BUT "THEY PROBABLY WILL HAVE TO IN LIGHT OF
PRESSURE". IN THIS REGARD, BOTH CHETTY AND PITMAN EMPHASIZED
STRONGLY THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THE USG PUT PRESSURE ON THE SAG
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OVER BIKO CASE, NOT ONLY FOR SYMBOLISM BUT AS AN AID IN
THEIR CASE AGAINST SAG, CHETTY ADDED.

C. CHETTY REVEALED PHONE CALL FROM US-BASED LAWYERS'
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN (CIVIL) RIGHTS ASKING FOR INFORMATION
ON BIKO CASE.

D. CHETTY RETURNS FROM KING WILLIAMS'S TOWN TOMORROW, AND
WOULD LIKE TO SEE AMBASSADOR FRIDAY (SEPT 15) EVENING TO
DISCUSS CASE FURTHER.

2. I AM SENDING WORD TO CHETTY THAT I WILL BE PLEASED TO
MEET WITH HIM ON FRIDAY AT HIS CONVENIENCE. MEANWHILE,
WE WILL TRY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH PITMAN TO SEE WHAT HE WILL
TELL US ABOUT THE CASE. I WOULD WELCOME ANY GUIDANCE DEPART-
MENT MAY HAVE FOR MY MEETING WITH CHETTY.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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